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**UU Wellspring: Sources**

Revised April 2022

# Background

Many Unitarian Universalists, young and old, are familiar with the seven principles, a statement of our most deeply held values that starts with “the inherent worth and dignity of every person” and ends with “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.”

In addition to affirming and promoting the seven principles, the living tradition of Unitarian

Universalism also draws on six sources for religious knowledge and spiritual growth: direct experience, prophetic women and men, world religions, Jewish and Christian teachings, humanist teachings, and Earth-centered traditions. If the principles are what we aspire to, the sources are what inspires us.

*Sources* is a prerequisite for all other years of UU Wellspring. Participants in Sources are challenged by, comforted by, and inspired by each one of the six sources. They learn about Unitarian Universalism, and also how to integrate their Unitarian Universalist faith more fully into their daily lives.

# Structure

*Sources* is divided into six units, one for each of the UU sources. Within each of the units, participants cycle through a head-hands-heart experience of the source:

* Head: When introduced to a given source, participants learn about our Unitarian Universalist faith tradition. Grounded in UU history and theology, topics such as courage, love, and justice are explored.
* Hands: For the second section, participants reflect on how taking the source seriously might change the way we live our lives. Meaningful topics are brought into the circle such as the theology of everyday life, the prophetic imperative, and reimagining God.

* Heart: During the third part of the head-hands-heart cycle, participants go deep into core spiritual themes: vulnerability, forgiveness, joy, and more. Spiritual struggles, spiritual practices, and spiritual questions are all brought forth, with the wisdom of each source as a guide.

Holding this all together are the essential components that are the heart of all UU Wellspring programs: small group connection, commitment to daily spiritual practice, monthly spiritual guidance, reflecting on the assignments, and putting our faith into action. All rest on a foundation of deep listening.

**UU Wellspring:**

**Sources Topics**

***Introduction***

***Retreat***

***Session 1*** *— Welcoming the Soul*

# Direct Experience

**Session 2** —Everyday Theology

**Session 3** — Spiritual Histories

# Prophetic People

**Session 4** — Prophetic Voices of Our [Unitarian](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vc0Ozo9Bne-zzozSS2d0H7mcwOCFVRGyTI9y5Xx6oJQ/edit) and Universalist Ancestors

**Session 5** — Prophetic Voices of Today

**Session 6** — Your Own Prophetic Voice: Vulnerability and Courage

***Session 7\**** *— Solstice Ritual*

# Jewish and Christian Teachings

**Session 8** — Jewish and Christian Teachings   
**Session 9** — Reimagining God: Process  
Theology

**Session 10** — Prayer

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# World Religions

**Session 11** — World Religions

**Session 12** — Forgiveness and Letting Go

# Earth-Centered Spirituality

**Session 13** — Nature as Spiritual Guide

**Session 14** — UUism and the Crisis of Life

**Session 15** —Theology of Joy

# Humanist Teachings

**Session 16** —Good without God

**Session 17** — UU Perspectives on Death and the

Afterlife

# Closing

**Session 18** — Let Your Life Speak

## **Session 19** — Celebration and Reflection

\*Attendees are encouraged to attend a solstice ritual if you prefer not to create one as a group.

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Required and Optional Books for Sources

1. Read as much as possible before the retreat:

* *Everyday Spiritual Practice: Simple Pathways for Enriching  
  Your Life*, Scott Alexander, editor. Available from the UUA Inspirit Bookstore and online retailers.

1. Read Before Session 14:

* *Heartwood: The Art of Living with the End in Mind* by Barbara Becker. Available from the UUA Inspirit Bookstore and online retailers.

1. Read before Session 18:

* *Let Your Life Speak* by Parker Palmer.

1. Optional: One or both, as possible, to use throughout the program:

* *Voices from the Margins* edited by Jacqui James and Mark D. Morrison-Reed
* *To Wake, To Rise: Meditations on Justice and Resilience* edited by Rev. William Sinkford.

All of the books are currently available from the UUA Inspirit Bookstore, online retailers and as ebooks.